the post-war years under George VI's daughter, Elizabeth IL Now the Empire has gone, and the Commonwealth—a holding-company formed to realise the Empire's dwindling residual assets —has almost disappeared likewise. Figures like Redeemer-Emeritus Nkrumah,Jomo Kenyatta and Dr. Banda provide a perfect cast for playing out the farce to the end, until England once again blessedly exists as a small island off the coast of Europe.

Ironically enough, it is in the field of economics, where scientific accuracy is supposed to prevail, that prognostications, mine included, have proved particularly fallacious. With great joy I described in *The Thirties* how MacDonald formed his National Government to 'save the Pound', which then was per-mitted to slither off the gold-standard. God save our gracious Pound! Yet the economies which MacDonald went to such pains to institute with a view to persuading New York bankers that we were still credit-worthy would scarcely have sufficed to finance for a single day the war which broke out in 1939, and continued for some five years, without evidently reducing us to bankruptcy. For most of my lifetime we have been living, economically speaking, in the red, to the accompaniment of dire warnings from bankers, financiers, and, between elections, from politicians, while all the while, to the outward eye, growing ever more prosperous. How this has come about, and what will be the outcome, I have no idea. MacDonald was fond of saying, with great emphasis, that you cannot put a

quart into a piut-pot. It seems that you can. He was likewise given to remarking that we must cut our coats according to our cloth. Apparently, we are under no such necessity.

'They ever must believe a lie who see with, not through, the eye/ Blake wrote. It was, for me, a key-thought when I was writing *The Thirties,* though then, of course, television had not provided a third eye for us to see with; one, moreover, which cannot be seen through, however hard the seer tries. Blake's saying has gone on echoing in my mind ever since. Such Hes believed! Never, surely, has there been credulity like it, African